United Nations

Daily Highlights

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Presidents of Croatia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and Bosnia and Herzegovina meet in Geneva with Co-Chairmen of International Conference to intensify efforts to bring peace to former Yugoslavia.

+ Administrative Committee on Coordination begins second regular session at Headquarters to consider, among other issues, report of inter-agency Task Force established to deal with United Nations response to Rio Conference.

+ Germany would seek permanent seat in Security Council if changes in Council's composition were to be considered, says Germany's Representative in Sixth Committee.

+ United Nations Commissioner for Refugees announces selection of President of Germany as winner of 1992 Nansen Medal for his commitment to promoting acceptance of refugees and fighting xenophobia.

+ Fourth Committee is told that United Nations plan on Western Sahara must be implemented to ensure self-determination and prevent return of war.

+ Support for convening world conference on human settlements in 1996 expressed in Second Comittee.

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The Presidents of Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and Bosnia and Herzegovina have been holding a series of meetings for the past two days in Geneva with the two Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on Former Yugoslavia, Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen.

According to a United Nations press officer based in Geneva, Yugoslav President Dobrica Cosic and Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic agreed yesterday "on the need to bring all the armed elements and para-military groups in Bosnia under effective control". They agreed that United Nations

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observers should be stationed on military airfields and on their common border as soon as possible.

Today, the Co-Chairmen held a meeting with President Cosic and Croatian President Franjo Tudjman, attended by the Commander of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), General Satish Nambiar. Following the meeting, General Nambiar told the press that troops were being withdrawn from the Dubrovnik area today, as scheduled, and that the United Nations flag was flying in the Prevlaca Peninsula.

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The Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) began this morning its second regular session at Headquarters with a private meeting between the Secretary-General and the heads of the United Nations agencies. The ACC, which is made up of the different bodies, agencies and programmes in the United Nations system, meets twice a year.

According to the Secretary-General's Spokesman, Joe Sills, the first item of business this afternoon would be the consideration of a report of an inter-agency Task Force established under the Chairmanship of the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Eduard Saouma, which deals with the Organization's response to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), and specifically Agenda 21. Secondly this afternoon, the ACC would discuss its own role and functioning as a coordinating body.

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Germany would seek a permanent seat in the Security Council if changes in the composition of the Council were to be considered, Germany's Representative, Ernst K. Martens, told the Sixth Committee (Legal) yesterday.

He also called on the regional organizations to assume greater responsibility in the peaceful settlement of disputes. The United Nations could not protect all those affected by external and internal wars. In Europe, for example, it was up to the Europeans to "put their common house in order", he said.

The Representative of Singapore, Zainal Arif, said expansion of the Security Council should not be allowed to impair its efficiency. Instead of the veto power, he proposed that all Council decisions be made by an affirmative vote of the members, including the concurring vote of three of the five permanent members.

The Committee is continuing its consideration of the report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization.

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President Richard von Weizsacker of Germany was named today as the winner of the 1992 Nansen Medal, for his commitment to promoting the acceptance of refugees and fighting all forms of xenophobia. The announcement was made by the United Nations Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata, Chairman of the Nansen Committee, who said that his "unwavering stand against intolerance is deeply appreciated by all of us who work on behalf of the world's more than 18 million refugees".

The Nansen Medal, instituted in 1954, is named after the Norwegian diplomat and explorer, Fridtjof Nansen, who was the first High Commissioner for Refugees under the League of Nations. The award is intended to focus attention on the plight of refugees and give new impetus to international support for displaced people.

The UNHCR, in a press release on Dr. von Weizsacker's selection, said that in granting the award to the President of Germany, the Nansen Committee also recognized the generosity of the German people who for years had received large numbers of asylum-seekers and refugees.

In a speech on 3 October, German National Day, Dr. von Weizsacker said, "Racist, anti-Semitic aggression strikes us with indignation. Those who pretend to resort to such violence in the interest of Germany abuse the name of our nation."

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The United Nations Western Sahara settlement plan must be fully implemented to ensure the realization of self-determination by the people of the Territory as well as prevent the return of war and instability to that region of Africa, speakers told the Fourth Committee (Decolonization Committee) yesterday.

In statements before the Committee, petitioners said Morocco had reneged on its agreement to implement the plan and that recent events in Western Sahara had heightened fears that the plan might collapse. A representative of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Rio de Oro (POLISARIO) called upon the leaders of Morocco "not to miss the historic" occasion presented by the settlement plan for the Territory.

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Endorsing the proposed convening of an international conference on housing and human settlements in 1996, the Representative of Pakistan today told the Second Committee (Economic and Financial) that the proper management of human settlements was essential to attain the overall goals of sustainable development as well as to assure a basic human right. He spoke on behalf of the "Group of 77" developing countries.

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Offering to host the proposed conference, the Representative of Turkey said housing should not be seen from a limited, North-South perspective, especially as the developing countries had much to offer the developed world in the area of human settlements.

Also today, the Second Committee began consideration of resolutions concerning large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing on high seas and Japan said his country intented to take the necessary measures to implement the global moratorium on it by 31 December.

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